

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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SUBJECT: TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT PROMULGATES LAWS ON STRIKES AND WEAPONS

1. SUMMARY. IN ITS FIRST OFFICIAL ACTS THE NEWLY INSTALLED TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED THREE NEW NATIONAL HOLIDAYS, CALLED UPON ALL CITIZENS TO TURN IN THEIR PRIVATE WEAPONS AND APPEALED FOR AN IMMEDIATE END TO STRIKES. END SUMMARY.

2. ON FEBRUARY 3 THE ANGOLAN TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT ISSUED ITS FIRST DECREE-LAW, WHICH ESTABLISHED THREE ANGOLAN HOLIDAYS: FEBRUARY 4, COMMEMORATING MPLA'S ATTEMPT TO FREE PRISONERS HELD IN LUANDA'S JAILS IN 1961, CONSIDERED TO BE THE OPENING FIGHT IN ANGOLA'S WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE; MARCH 15, COMMEMORATING THE GENERAL ATTACK IN NORTHERN ANGOLA IN 1961 BY UPA (PRECURSOR OF FNLA) AND DECEMBER 25, CELEBRATING UNITA'S 1966 ATTACK UPON TEIXEIRA DA SOUSA, WHICH MARKED ITS EMERGENCY AS A LIBERATION FORCE.

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3. THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE FROM THE COUNCIL

OF MINISTERS RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT OF WORKERS TO STRIKE BUT APPEALING TO WORKERS AND UNIONS TO SUSPEND ALL STRIKES UNTIL THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT TAKES THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF THE WORKING CLASSES. THIS IS A FIRST HESITANT ATTEMPT TO TURN AROUND THE CHAOTIC LABOR SITUATION PREVAILING IN ANGOLA'S CITIES. AS FEBRUARY 4 IS A HOLIDAY THERE IS NO MEANS TO GUAGE WORKER REACTIONS TO THE APPEAL BUT IF MPLA GIVES ITS SUPPORT STRIKES ARE LIKELY TO CEASE, AS MPLA IS THE PRIME ORGANIZING FORCE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

4. IN A SEPARATE COMMUNIQUE THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS APPEALED TO THE PEOPLE TO TURN IN ALL ARMS AND WAR MATERIALS TO THE LUANDA MILITARY COMMAND. THE COMMUNIQUE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS CONCRETE PLANS IN MIND TO OBLIGE COMPLIANCE WITH THIS APPEAL. THIS IS CERTAIN TO PRESENT PROBLEMS FOR ANGOLA'S HEAVILY ARMED WHITE POPULATION AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF THE TAXI DRIVERS IN LUANDA WHO, WHEN ORDERED BY THE ARMY TO TURN IN THEIR WEAPONS IN THE WAKE OF JULY RIOTS, TURNED OVER ONE GUN APIECE AND HID THE OTHERS.
KILLORAN

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